

**REMARKS**

As indicated above, this is a Preliminary Amendment of the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed herewith.

Claims 25 and 27 have been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention. The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

Claims 25 - 33 remain in this application, and claims 1 - 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The applicants respectfully submit that in Girardello, lines 52 - 57, column 2, a conventional structure is noted, which is a conventional structure obtained by casehardening and quench hardening (see, lines 29 - 44, column 2 in Girardello). That is, such discussion in such portion of Girardello has no significance when it comes to Girardello's structure; and as such, such discussion does not contribute to hardening of a core. However, in order to further distinguish the applicants' claimed invention over the teachings of the prior art, including Girardello (i.e., a distinct difference from the casehardening and quench hardening steel), claim 25 has been amended in order to more particularly recite that the claimed crawler belt bushing: "is made of a steel having a carbon content equal to

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those of medium carbon steels and/or eutectoid steels, which is 0.35 wt% or more.”

The applicants further respectfully submit that in the prior art, the above-discussed casehardening and quench hardening is: “aimed at superficially enriching with carbon a steel which has a low carbon content” (see, lines 29 - 37, column 2 in Girardello), and is quite distinct from claimed structural arrangement, as recited in the amended claims submitted herewith. For example, carbon content in casehardening steel is, in general, within a range of 0.1 to 0.25 wt%. It is noted that casehardening steel of UNI7846/78 standards is considered to correspond to ISO683-11:1987 standards or JIS G7503:2000 standards. According to JIS G7503:2000 standards, the carbon content is 0.25 wt% or less.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicants’ undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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